

Message Text

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ACTION CPR-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CG-00 DOTE-00 PM-04 CIAE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 /019 W
-----172323Z 069534 /72-61

R 171900Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
TO USCOMSOLANT
INFO JCS WASHDC
CNO WASHDC
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
CINCLANTFLT NORFOLK VA
COMNAVFORCARIB ROOSEVELT ROADS PR
USDAO CARACAS
SECSTATE WASHDC 234

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 0152

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, US, TD
SUBJECT: UNITAS 18 PRELIMINARY PLANNING

REF: USCOMSOLANT 091557Z DEC 76 (NOTAL)

1. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO COAST GUARD (NAVY) COMMANDING OFFICER, COMMANDER MERVYN WILLIAMS, IS ENTHUSIASTIC AT PROSPECT OF UNITAS 18 STOP IN TRINIDAD IN MID-NOVEMBER 1977. HE FEELS PROPOSED TIMING IS IDEAL, AND HOPES THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO CONDUCT T&T COAST GUARD OPERATIONS WITH THE UNITAS TASK FORCE WHILE IT APPROACHES TRINIDAD, AS WAS ENVISAGED LAST YEAR FOR THE UNITAS 17 CRUISE.

2. WILLIAMS AGAIN EXPRESSED REGRET AT THE UNTIMELY CANCELLATION BY HIS GOVERNMENT OF THE VISIT OF UNITAS 17 AND INDICATED GRATIFICATION THAT THIS EPISODE HAS NOT SOURED THE US NAVY ATTITUDE TOWARD TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. HE FEELS THAT OUR INFORMAL CONSULTATION
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AT THIS TIME OFFERS HIM SUFFICIENT TIME TO GET FULL MINISTERIAL APPROVAL AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITAS VISIT AND OF THE PROPOSED COAST GUARD TRAINING EXERCISE. OUR PRESENT DISCUSSIONS DO NOT, HOWEVER, CONSTITUTE FORMAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL, WHICH WE WILL SEEK IN DUE COURSE WHEN AUTHORIZED.

3. EMBASSY WISHES TO CAUTION ALL INVOLVED NAVAL COMMANDS, HOWEVER, AGAINST INCAUTIONS PRESS RELEASES REFERRING TO ANY TRAINING EXERCISE WITH THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO COAST GUARD. SUCH A PRESS RELEASE EMANATING FROM THE US NAVY LAST YEAR DIRECTLY PRECIPITATED UNFORTUNATE CANCELLATION OF TRINIDAD VISIT, SINCE LINKAGE IN THE PRESS RELEASE OF TRINIDAD WITH CHILE IN PARTICULAR CAUSED CONCERN, AND THE INCORRECT CONCLUSION WAS DRAWN BY SOME THAT "JOINT OPERATIONS" WERE BEING PLANNED TO INCLUDE THE CHILEAN NAVY. SINCE FROM USN VIEWPOINT THE TRINIDAD STOP IS PRIMARILY FOR REFUELING AND GOODWILL, AND T&T COAST GUARD WILL NOT AT ANY TIME OPERATE AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE UNITAS TASK FORCE UNDER UNIFIED COMMAND, WE BELIEVE IT WISE NOT TO REFER IN ANY PUBLICITY MATERIAL TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO IN THE CONTEXT OF UNITAS OPERATIONAL EXERCISES. TO DO SO TENDS TO LINK THE EXERCISES HERE WITH EXERCISES EARLIER IN THE VOYAGE INVOLVING SOUTHERN CONE MILITARY COMPONENTS WITH WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HERE SIMPLY WILL NOT PERMIT ITSELF TO BE LINKED, EVEN IF IT INVOLVES AWKWARD CANCELLATIONS SUCH AS OCCURRED IN 1976. AS COMMANDER WILLIAMS HAS NOTED, HOWEVER, 1977 IS NOT AN ELECTION YEAR, AS LAST YEAR WAS, AND WE SHOULD LOOK FORWARD TO A HIGHLY PLEASANT UNITAS VISIT AS WAS THE CASE IN 1975.

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 17-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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